One night I was sitting in my room doing my homework, when I heard my nine-year-old brother’s door slam shut. He rarely ever does that, so it was a surprise to me. I stopped what I was doing to make sure things were okay. Walking on eggshells, I quietly knocked on his door and asked what was wrong. He looked at me as he was wiping the tears from his eyes with his sleeve. I asked, “Everything okay?”, and he threw his social studies study guide on the floor. “I can’t get this. Daddy keeps sending me back up here until I can memorize the information.”

I usually think that when it comes to punishment or predicaments my brother gets what he deserves and he needs to figure out how to get out of it himself. Sometimes he will try once or twice, get frustrated, and then give up. This time was different. I knew he had been trying continuously and wanted to get it right. However, he kept coming up short. It looked like he was really in trouble so I decided to help him out. I looked at the packet; it was a list of events that happened in history and the dates they took place. He knew what some of them were but he had problems was he was trying to memorize the order and didn’t really learn them. He and I went over the material until he knew every single event in the history packet. I would continuously quiz him on the dates and ask him to tell me what happened. I even went out of order just to change it up so he would get caught off guard.

It took awhile, but he started to get the hang of it. He wasn’t going to go back downstairs to show my dad until he was one hundred percent sure he knew everything. After about an hour and a half or so, he was ready and I told him it was okay for him to go show dad what he knew. So he confidently trotted down the stairs and was able to tell my dad every part of the study guide. He was so relieved and proud of himself and my dad was too.

He thanked me, and I was just happy because I was the one who helped him succeed in something. After that night, occasionally he has come to me for help with homework in other subjects. It was important to have my help this particular time because ultimately, he had no one else to turn to. I understood that and that is why I did it. I may not always have the time to help him but I try to as much as I can. Every time I do help it ends up better for him when he shows homework to our parents. In a way, it has brought us closer without anything said. He never asked if he could come to me after that night but it was like an unsaid agreement. Now he and I still fight about little stuff that really isn’t worth time or effort, especially when arguing with a nine year old. However the tone always changes when it comes to homework and other kinds of help. Hopefully, he feels the same way about other things that will go on in his life he may need help with.